

PENNSYLVANIA STATE HOUSE DISTRICT 19

The 19th district covers neighborhoods in Pittsburgh's North, South, and East Sides, including Downtown, parts of the Hill District, Hazelwood, parts of the South Side, Allentown, and Beltzhoover, Central North Side, Manchester, and North Shore. It is currently represented by incumbent Aerion Abney, who won the April 5 special election to serve remaining term of former Rep. Jake Wheatley after he stepped down to become Mayor Gainey's chief of staff.

BY **JORDANA ROSENFELD** // JORDANA@PGHCITYPAPER.COM



AERION ABNEY



GLENN GRAYSON

BIOGRAPHY

Incumbent candidate. Lives in Manchester. Graduated from the University of Pittsburgh. Previous committeeperson for the 21st Ward, Fourth District. Worked as a voting rights advocate, grantmaker, and legislative assistant in this district for Rep. Jake Wheatley. Sits on boards of several organizations working to improve life for Black Pittsburghers.

Pastor. Currently leading Wesley Center A.M.E. Zion Church. Founder and executive director of Center that CARES, a community center for kids in Hill District. Former president of the PIIN (Pennsylvania Interfaith Impact Network). Sits on the boards of several organizations working to improve life for Black Pittsburghers.

CASH BAIL

Against cash bail. Told *CP*, "The money aspect should not be a burden for somebody being held in jail for two weeks just waiting to have their trial."

Served on county progress panel on criminal justice reform that recommended decreased use of cash bail through more consistent use of a pretrial risk-assessment algorithm.

GUN VIOLENCE

Told the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, "Ultimately, big picture, we just have to get these guns off the streets and out of the hands of kids. I'm really ready to take a long-term approach to the work and fix some of what is broken in some of our communities." Website says he will strengthen gun laws.

Lost 18-year-old son to gun violence in 2010. Told *Trib Live* he would advocate for violence prevention and to curb gun violence. Under CARES, offers anti-violence programs and academic support for young people. Twice honored by former President Barack Obama for his violence prevention work.

DEVELOPMENT

Told *Trib Live* he aims to combat gentrification. Expressed concern to *CP* about uneven neighborhood development. Said he has "anti-displacement strategies," like requiring that residents who must move from buildings for redevelopment or demolition are resettled before construction and tax abatement to keep current residents from being priced-out. "I want to have development without displacement."

Told *Trib Live* he would work to revitalize local neighborhoods without gentrifying them. Wrote in a 2013 *Post-Gazette* op-ed in support of "re-directing gentrification into healthier, mixed-income housing models."

ENDORSEMENTS

Allegheny County Democratic Committee

None found